
Accident motivates scholarship recipient

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Scholarship recipient not deterred by accident, inspired to help others

October 26, 2010, started out as just another day for Escalante High School senior Jacob Leyba, but it's a day he'll remember the rest of his life. Not only because he nearly lost his life in a traffic accident, but because he is using that experience and its aftermath as a springboard to a career in exercise science and physical therapy.

Leyba recently received a Senator Pete Domenici Endowed Scholarship, a \$2,500 financial award for four years that will go toward tuition and other expenses at the University of New Mexico starting this fall.

"Before the accident, college wasn't on my mind. I was all about sports," said Leyba, who played football, basketball, and ran track at the small Northern New Mexico school.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do. After the accident, I established a relationship with my physical therapist . . . it showed me what I wanted to do," Leyba continued. "I've been through physical therapy. I'm excited, because I feel like I can have a huge impact on the world."

Leyba's father, David, a Maintenance and Site Services Division employee at the Lab, told his son about the Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship program.

"I couldn't be more thankful for this award, because without it I wasn't sure if I could afford the cost of attending UNM," he said. "College is really expensive. It's going to help."

Leyba encourages other students to apply for a LAESF scholarship. "I would recommend it highly. They grant a huge amount of money. Go for it," said Leyba. "If you show that you're willing to go on to higher education and that you want to be a success, LANL employees and the LANL Foundation will help you to succeed. They know that you're determined to succeed."

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